

ECEAP Outcomes

2014-15



**Early
Childhood
Education &
Assistance
Program**

Washington State Department of Early Learning

www.del.wa.gov/eceap
eceap@del.wa.gov

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Introduction to ECEAP

The Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) is Washington's pre-kindergarten program that prepares 3- and 4-year-old children from low-income families for success in school and in life. The Department of Early Learning (DEL) oversees the program.

Since 1985, ECEAP has focused on the well-being of the whole child by providing comprehensive nutrition, health, education and family support services to Washington's most at-risk young children. ECEAP is aligned with nationally researched programs that have shown exceptional returns on investment.

ECEAP is effective at:

- Increasing children's social-emotional, physical and pre-academic skills.
- Supporting families and building their capacity to encourage their children's success.
- Ensuring that each child receives medical and dental care to start school healthy.

The 2014-15 school year was an expansion year for ECEAP with:

- A total of 47 ECEAP contracts with educational service districts, school districts, community colleges, local governments and nonprofits; eight contractors were new to ECEAP this year.
- Services in 36 of 39 Washington counties.*
- A total of 336 ECEAP sites across Washington, including 65 new locations.
- A total of 10,091 slots for children, which was an increase of 1,350.
- A total of 11,352 children enrolled at some point during the year; a 12.5 percent turnover rate.
- A total of 2,946 eligible children on the waiting list in March 2015.

ECEAP received nine out of 10 quality points from the [National Institute for Early Education Research \(NIEER\)](#) for our state early learning guidelines, comprehensive family and health services, staff professional development requirements, class sizes, staff-to-child ratios, meals and DEL's monitoring of program quality. The 10th quality point would require ECEAP lead teachers to have a bachelor's degree. DEL currently requires an associate or higher degree with 30 quarter credits of early childhood education.

*Head Start provides services in two of the WA counties not served by ECEAP – Jefferson and Skamania. Garfield County is sparsely populated with about 20 eligible children dispersed across the county, but will add ECEAP in 2015-16.

ECEAP Models

In 2014-15, DEL began funding Full School Day and Extended Day ECEAP models, in addition to the original Part Day model. DEL requires adherence to ECEAP Performance Standards for all models.

Part Day ECEAP is:

- At least 320 hours of preschool in no less than 30 weeks a year.
- At least 2.5 hours of class per day.
- Contracted at \$7,331 per slot for children.
- Exempt from child care licensing if operating less than 4 hours per day.

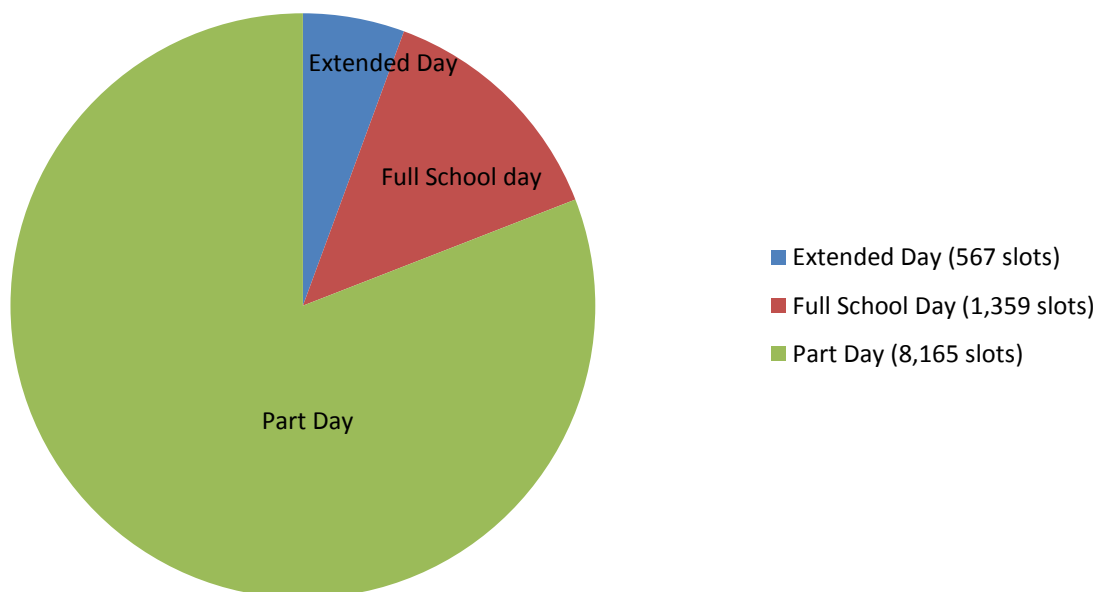
Full School Day ECEAP is:

- At least of 1000 hours of preschool in no less than 30 weeks a year.
- At least 5.5 to 6.5 hours of class per day; a minimum of four days per week.
- Contracted at an average of \$9,960 per child, with regional variations.
- Licensed by DEL through the Expedited Licensing process or the full child care license.

Extended Day ECEAP is:

- Open at least 10 hours per day, 5 days per week, year-round.
- Contracted at an average of \$15,391 per child, with regional variations.
- Fully licensed for child care by DEL.

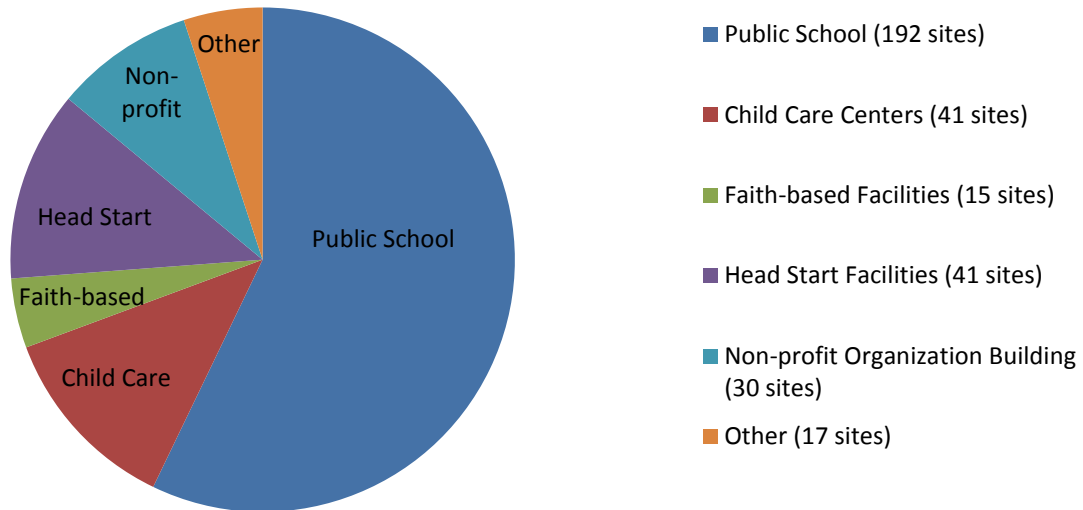
Numbers of slots for children in each ECEAP model in 2014-15:



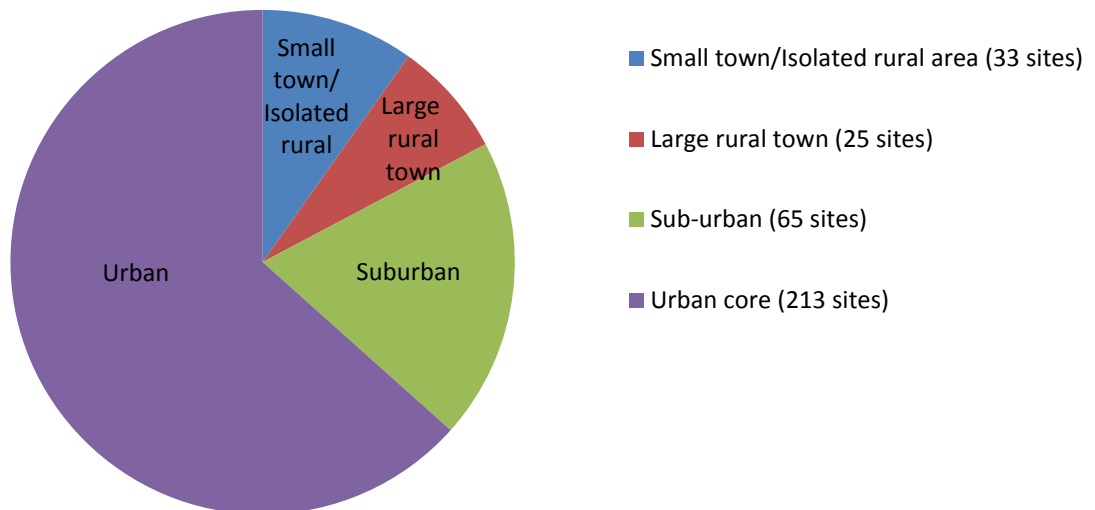
ECEAP Locations

ECEAP classrooms are in a variety of physical locations across the state of Washington. Though just 41 sites identify as child care centers, 91 ECEAP sites have a child care license. A minimum of 53 sites offer child care outside of the ECEAP day.

Number of sites by location type:



Population density at physical location of ECEAP sites:



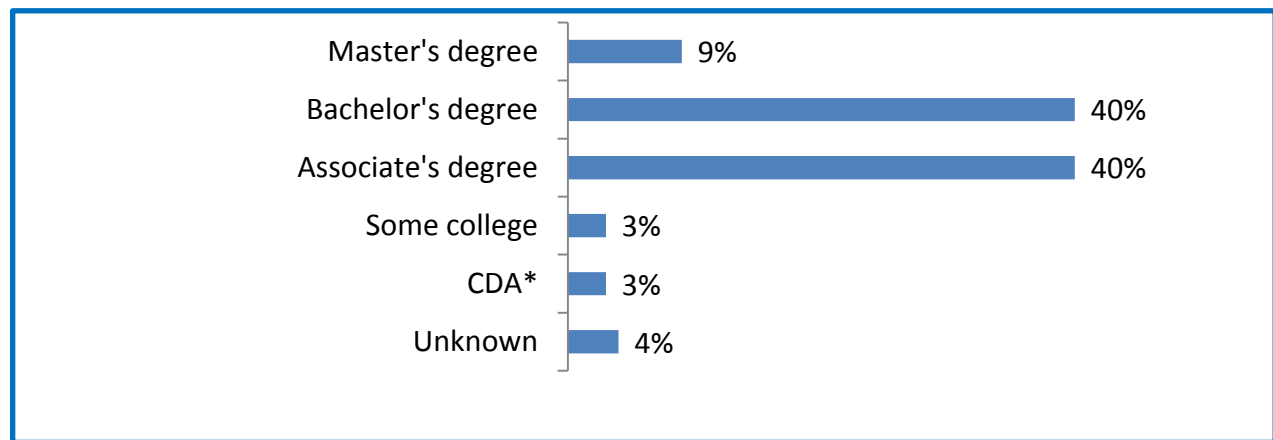
Lead Teacher Qualifications

Since 1986, ECEAP Performance Standards have required lead teachers to hold an associate's degree or higher with 30 credits of early childhood education, or a state teaching certificate with an endorsement in ECE (pre-K through grade 3). Some teachers are on a five-year plan to complete this requirement. Research links early learning and development to the educational qualifications of teachers ([NIEER policy brief](#)).

During the 2014-15 school year, DEL was changing from a manual process to collect ECEAP lead teacher qualifications to use of the MERIT data system for this purpose. For this reason, 2013-14 data is presented below. More recent data is not yet available.

In 2013-14, 81 percent of lead teachers met the DEL requirement of an associate's degree or higher with 30 or more quarter credits of early childhood education. This has increased from 69 percent in 2007, when DEL intensified monitoring of qualifications.

ECEAP Lead Teachers' degrees, in 2013-14, by percentage of teachers:



*Child Development Associate credential

ECEAP Funding

Total ECEAP funding was \$83,064,768, of which 97 percent went directly to communities to benefit children and families.

The average cost per child was \$8,232 which included part day, full school day, and extended day ECEAP models for the first time. Previous years had part day ECEAP only.

	2006-07*	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Total funded slots for children	5,976	8,391	8,741	10,091
Total allotment	\$35,446,785	\$57,156,000	\$60,229,000	\$83,064,768
Percent for state admin	4.60%	2.25%	3.37%	2.96%
Percent to contractors	95.40%	97.75%	96.63%	97.04%
Cost per child	\$5,871	\$6,812	\$6,890	\$8,232

*2006-07 is included for comparison.

Values have not been adjusted for inflation.

ECEAP Family Income and Education

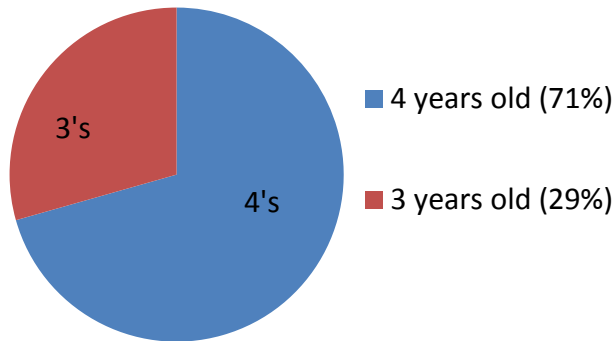
In 2014, federal poverty level (FPL) was \$23,850 annually for a family of four. Families at or below 110% FPL, or \$26,235 for a family of four, are eligible for ECEAP based on income alone.

Family income	Percent of families	
Family income	50% of FPL and under	42%
	50.1-80% of FPL	22%
	80.1-110% of FPL	27%
Parents' education level	6 th grade or less	11%
	7 th to 12 th grade, no diploma or GED	30%

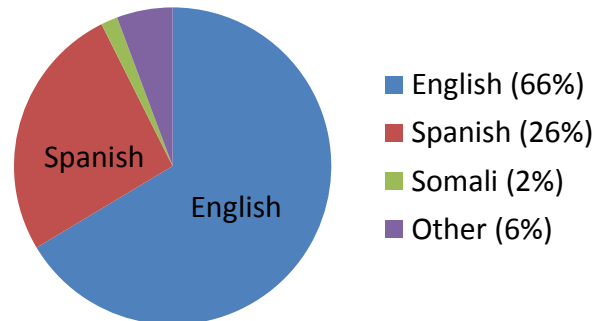
Child Characteristics

n = 11,353

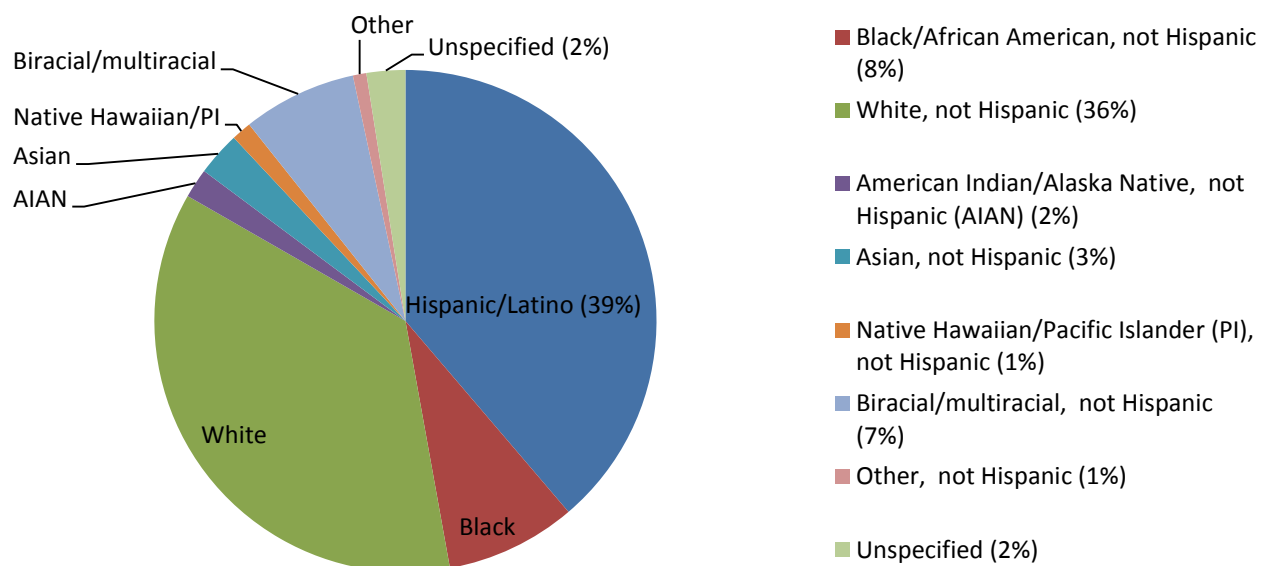
Age on August 31



Home Language



Race and Ethnicity



Data from DEL's Early Learning Management System (ELMS)

Additional characteristics of 2014-15 ECEAP children

- 42 percent lived in single parent homes.
- 11 percent were homeless at some point during the school year.
- 9.5 percent had a chronic health condition.
- 9.8 percent were on an Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- 3.5 percent received an IEP as a result of ECEAP.
- 11.2 percent are in families currently or previously receiving Child Protective Services.
- 9.9 percent are in families impacted by substance abuse.
- 10.6 percent are in families impacted by domestic violence.
- 5.4percent had low birth weight.
- 3.9 percent were born to teen parents.
- 4.2 percent were in foster care. Another 3.4 percent were in kinship care or a non-relative guardian.
- 2.0 percent changed guardians during the school year.
- 14.6 percent have a parent experiencing mental health issues.
- 7.7 percent are in isolated families, without a support system of people that can assist.
- 7.3 percent have a parent who is developmentally or physically disabled.
- 5.1 percent have a parent who is incarcerated.
- 1.5 percent have a parent currently or recently deployed to a combat zone.
- 0.5 percent (56 children) were previously expelled from an early learning program for behavioral reasons.

ECEAP prioritizes children for enrollment based on family income and environmental or developmental risk factors that are linked by research to school performance.

Child Development and Learning Outcomes

Children enrolled in ECEAP are assessed three times during the school year to track their social-emotional, physical, language, and cognitive development and their early literacy and math skills. English language acquisition is also tracked for children who speak a different language at home.

ECEAP contractors use *GOLD™ by Teaching Strategies* to assess children. *GOLD™* is a valid, reliable seamless assessment system for children from birth through the kindergarten year. *GOLD™* is also used as part of the Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKIDS). It is aligned with the Common Core State Standards. All ECEAP lead teachers implementing *GOLD* complete an interrater reliability (IRR) certification to ensure accuracy of the data. By the end of the 2014-15 school year, 82 percent of ECEAP lead teachers achieved IRR certification.

GOLD™ meets the assessment standards of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association of State Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education. Teachers observe children in the context of everyday activities and natural settings over time, record their observations and use them to rate 36 objectives for each child, plus two more for children learning the English language. Children are compared to widely-held expectations for knowledge, skills and behaviors, using different expectations for 3- and 4-year-olds. Children in their last preschool year before kindergarten are also compared to the *GOLD™* Readiness Scale (kindergarten readiness scale). Teachers use the data to plan curricula and individualize instructional supports and child guidance. DEL uses the data to determine areas of focus and statewide training.

Summary of Development and Learning Gains:



For 2014-15, DEL collected *GOLD™* assessment results for more than 7,200 ECEAP children who had ratings in both fall and spring of the school year.

Children made progress in all areas of development. The following percentages of children moved from “below age level” to “at or above age level” during their time in ECEAP.

- Social-emotional development – 44%
- Physical development – 40%
- Language development – 38%
- Cognitive development – 44%
- Literacy development - 47%
- Mathematics - 56%

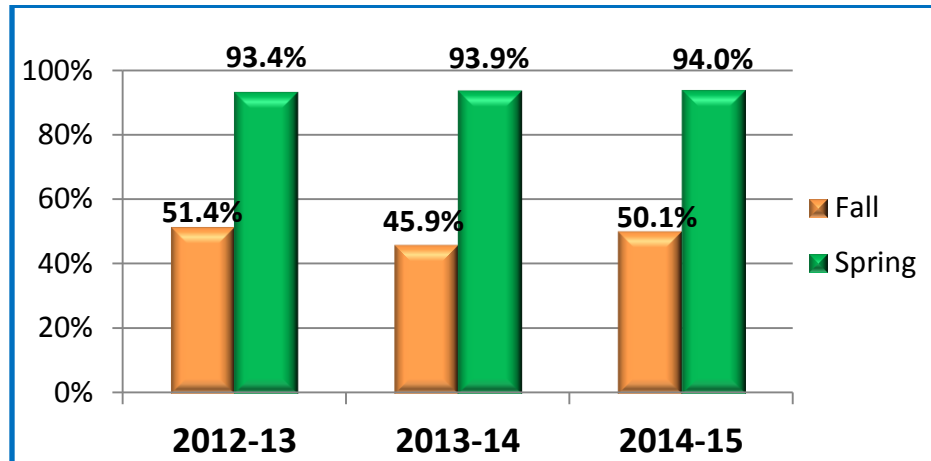
Social-Emotional Development

Percent of children at or above age level in this domain, in fall (beginning of school year) and spring (end of school year).

For 2012-13, n = 4,324

For 2013-14, n = 7,047

For 2014-15, n = 7,226



There is a strong connection between children's early relationships and behaviors and their later development and learning. For this reason, assessing children's social-emotional development accurately and supporting their growth and competence in this area is especially important. Teaching Strategies GOLD® includes three social-emotional objectives:

Regulates own emotions and behaviors

Self-regulation is ranked as the most important characteristic necessary for school readiness by kindergarten teachers. Children who positively regulate their emotions and behaviors do better in school and have an easier time getting along with peers. Children with poor emotional regulation skills are not likely to get along well with teachers and peers.

Establishes and sustains positive relationships

Children's ability to form positive relationships with adults is important to their social-emotional development and academic success. Warm, supportive teacher-child relationships are related to children's self-direction and positive attitudes toward school. Children's ability to build positive relationships with peers affects their social competence, school adjustment, and academic success.

Participates cooperatively and constructively in group situations

The foundational skills for being a productive member of social and learning groups are established during the early childhood years, and they are important for early school success. Positive group participation includes work-related skills like listening, following directions, behaving appropriately, staying on task and organizing work materials; poor work-related skills in kindergarten are related to behavioral difficulties and lower academic achievement in the early primary grades.

From Research Foundation: Teaching Strategies GOLD® Assessment System

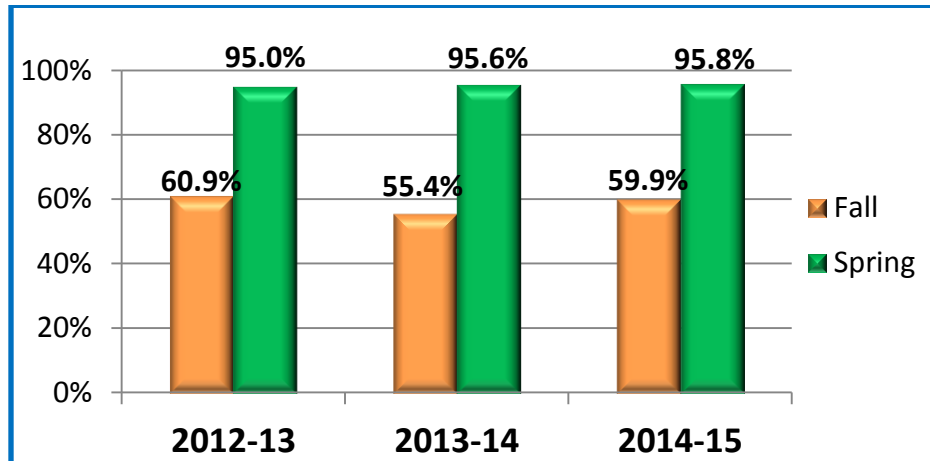
Physical Development

Percent of children at or above age level in this domain, in fall (beginning of school year) and spring (end of school year).

For 2012-13, n = 4,497

For 2013-14, n = 7,082

For 2014-15, n = 7,255



Physical development includes children's gross-motor (large muscle) and fine-motor (small muscle) skills. Physical development affects other areas of development. In fact, brain research points to the connection between early, positive movement experiences and brain development. Physical development is also linked to children's emotional development and school performance. The physical development objectives are:

Demonstrates traveling skills

Traveling involves moving the body through space. The early years are critical for the development of the large muscles needed for traveling. When children with disabilities achieve greater independent mobility, they show improved social and language development.

Demonstrates balancing skills

Turning, stretching, stopping, rolling, jumping, swinging, and dodging require balance. Children's ability to balance affects their performance of gross-motor tasks.

Demonstrates gross-motor manipulative skills

The early years are important for the development of fundamental gross-motor manipulative skills including throwing, catching, and kicking. When children are given discreet directions, such as "Watch the ball" or "Reach with your hands," they learn to focus on the skill so they can perform it more efficiently.

Demonstrates fine-motor strength and coordination

Fine-motor skills involve grasping and releasing objects using fingers and hands and coordinating movements with the eyes. These skills are important in the performance of daily routines and many school-related tasks. When teachers provide structure and guidance, children can increase their fine-motor skills.

From Research Foundation: Teaching Strategies GOLD® Assessment System

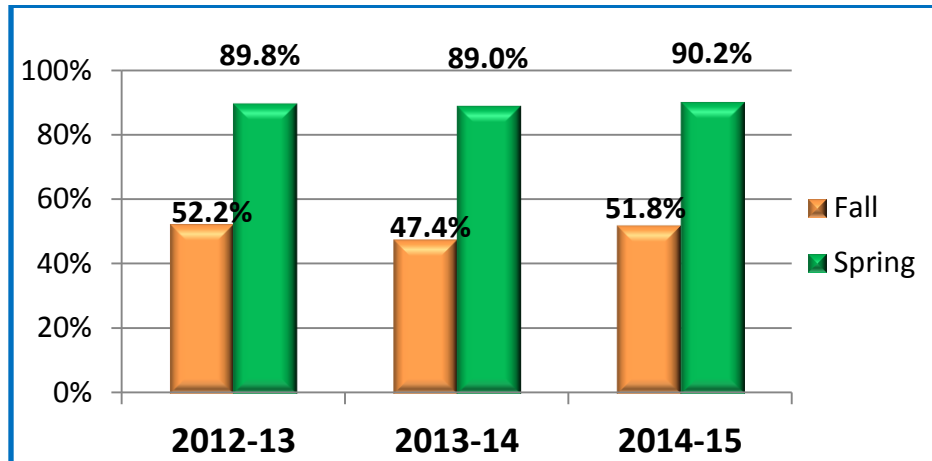
Language Development

Percent of children at or above age level in this domain, in fall (beginning of school year) and spring (end of school year).

For 2012-13, n = 4,479

For 2013-14, n = 7,058

For 2014-15, n = 7,211



Strong language skills are essential for children's success in school and life. Oral language—including grammar, the ability to define words and listening comprehension—helps provide the foundation and is an ongoing support for literacy. The oral language objectives are:

Listens to and understands increasingly complex language

To comprehend language, children must focus their attention and listen with a purpose. They must accurately and quickly recognize and understand what they hear. Receptive language (including listening to, recognizing and understanding the communication of others) starts to develop before expressive language, but they are closely connected.

Uses language to express thoughts and needs

Oral language is important to children's literacy development. Children's first writing experiences are usually based on what they learned through narrative talk. Their literacy development is also influenced by their ability to define words and their knowledge of grammar.

Uses appropriate conversational and other communication skills

Children benefit from conversations that include varied vocabulary and challenge their thinking. Such conversations contribute to early reading success. In addition, conversations are important to children's cognitive and social-emotional learning.



From Research Foundation: Teaching Strategies GOLD® Assessment System

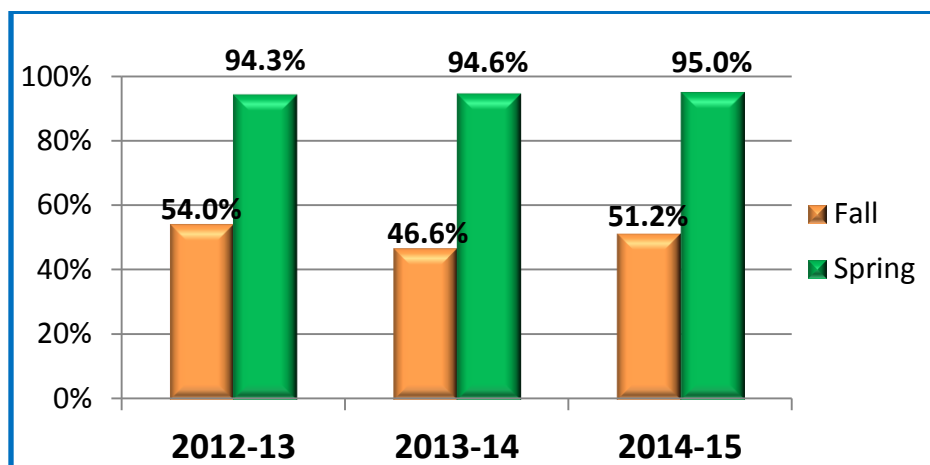
Cognitive Development

Percent of children at or above age level in this domain, in fall (beginning of school year) and spring (end of school year).

For 2012-13, n = 4,423

For 2013-14, n = 7,043

For 2014-15, n = 7,211



Cognitive development, also called intellectual development, is influenced by various factors including biological makeup, the environment, and how the child approaches learning tasks (e.g., attention, persistence, curiosity, and flexibility). A child's background knowledge, or knowledge base, also affects the way a child thinks. This background knowledge influences the child's information processing, memory, classification, problem solving, language acquisition, and reading and mathematics learning. The cognitive development objectives are:

Demonstrates positive approaches to learning

Children who have positive approaches to learning are more likely to succeed academically and to have more positive interactions with peers. The abilities to resist distractions, remain positively engaged, and persist at learning tasks are related positively to children's academic achievement, cognitive development, and peer interactions. In addition, cognitive flexibility is important for children's academic achievement, and flexible thinking is critical to children's development of sorting and categorization skills, understanding of concepts, problem-solving skills, reasoning skills, divergent thinking, and inventiveness.

Remembers and connects experiences

As children develop their abilities to attend and to use memory strategies, their learning is enhanced. Adult scaffolding, or support, helps children attend and use memory strategies such as categorizing.



Uses classification skills

The ability to classify is important for learning and remembering. Exploration of objects, expanding knowledge of the world, and increased language skills contribute to children's ability to classify.

Uses symbols and images to represent something not present

Thinking symbolically is necessary for language development, problem solving, reading, writing, mathematical thinking, and participating fully in society. Before children can effectively use symbols such as letters, numbers, or maps, they must understand implicitly that symbols represent other things. Dramatic play, sometimes called symbolic play, is an important vehicle for development and learning. Dramatic play contributes to children's development of abstract thinking and imagination and supports their school adjustment, memory, language, and self-regulation abilities.

From Research Foundation: Teaching Strategies GOLD® Assessment System

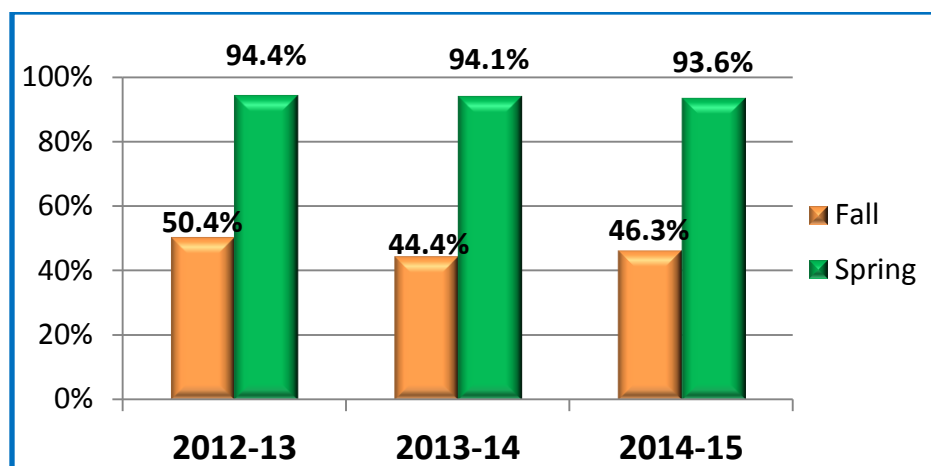
Literacy Development

Percent of children at or above age level in this domain, in fall (beginning of school year) and spring (end of school year).

For 2012-13, n = 2,100

For 2013-14, n = 6,918

For 2014-15, n = 7,022



The early years are critical for literacy development. The level to which a child progresses in reading and writing is one of the best predictors of whether the child will function competently in school and in life. Effective instruction in the early years can have a large impact on children's literacy development. The assessment system has these literacy objectives:

Demonstrates phonological awareness

Phonological sensitivity is a strong predictor of later reading, writing, and spelling ability. Instruction that strengthens children's phonological awareness has been shown to contribute to later reading success.

Demonstrates knowledge of the alphabet

Young children's alphabet knowledge, especially their ability to rapidly name letters and numerals in random order, is a strong predictor of later reading, writing, and spelling ability. Children's knowledge of the alphabet is also closely related to their comprehension skills by the end of second grade.



Demonstrates knowledge of print and its uses

Young children's concepts about print are a good predictor of later reading, writing, and spelling ability. In addition, understanding that print is meaningful is one of the first steps children take in learning to read and write.



Comprehends and responds to books and other texts

Comprehension of oral language and simple texts is essential to future reading success; children learn to process what they hear and read. Children who engage in frequent activities with books have larger vocabularies. These children learn to read better than children who have few book experiences.

Demonstrates emergent writing skills

Writing letters or name writing is a predictor of later literacy. By exploring writing, children learn about letters, sounds, and the meaning of text. Understanding the mechanics of the writing system (letter naming and letter-sound correspondence) has a moderate correlation with reading in the primary grades.

From Research Foundation: Teaching Strategies GOLD® Assessment System

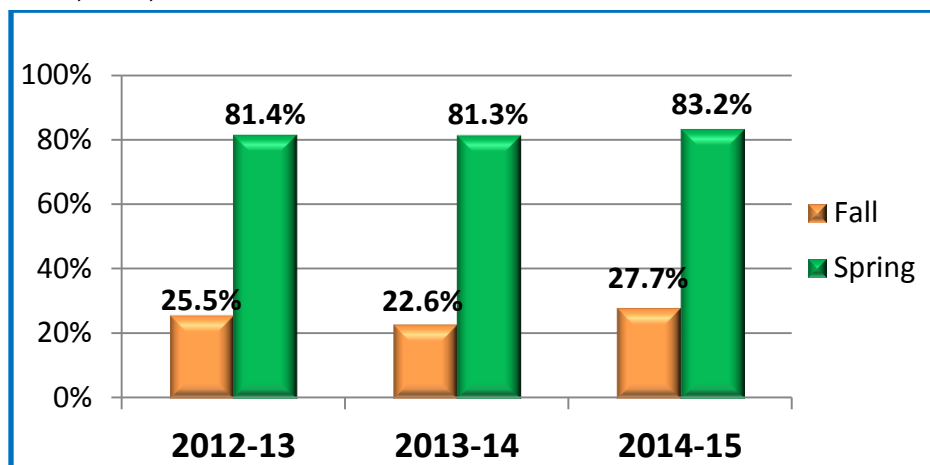
Mathematics

Percent of children at or above age level in this domain, in fall (beginning of school year) and spring (end of school year).

For 2012-13, n = 4,202

For 2013-14, n = 6,958

For 2014-15, n = 7,068



Research links early math skills and later school reading and math achievement. Mathematical knowledge at kindergarten entry is predictive of future mathematics success throughout their years in school. Evidence shows that high-quality early childhood education programs can make a difference in children's mathematical learning. These mathematics objectives are:

Uses number concepts and operations

Understanding of counting, number symbols, and number operations is fundamental to success with more complex mathematics. Through both everyday experiences and planned learning experiences, children begin to construct understandings of number concepts and operations.

Explores and describes spatial relationships and shapes

Understanding spatial relationships and shapes helps children build the foundation for understanding geometry. Children who have a strong spatial sense do better in mathematics.

Compares and measures

Children's initial ideas about size, quantity, and seriation involve comparing their play materials and books. They experiment with measurement by lining up and comparing objects. They begin to connect number to length as they use nonstandard measurement tools, e.g., links, blocks, rods. In addition, children can benefit from exploring and using tools with uniform units (e.g., rulers and centimeter cubes) as their measurement ideas and skills are developing.

Demonstrates knowledge of patterns

Children begin to identify patterns in their environment at an early age. Guiding children to understand patterns is a foundational skill in mathematics. Learning experiences that focus on patterns facilitate children's generalizations about number combinations, counting strategies, and problem solving.

From Research Foundation: Teaching Strategies GOLD® Assessment System

Kindergarten Readiness

In the 2014-15 school year, approximately 5,200 children were enrolled in ECEAP who would be age-eligible for kindergarten the following year, those in their “Pre-K year.” For these children, we compared fall 2014 and spring 2015 GOLD™ results to *GOLD Readiness for Kindergarten Entry (for pre-k children)* benchmark. This represents the range of skills for each area of development needed to be ready for kindergarten. Results are presented below for all ECEAP Pre-K children and for those who completed two full school years of ECEAP.

GOLD™ is also used in fall at all state-funded full day kindergartens in Washington as part of the Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKIDS). The fall 2015 results are included below using GOLD™’s *Readiness for Kindergarten Entry (for kindergarten children)* benchmark, for low-income kindergarteners and for all kindergartners assessed. Please note that low-income is defined as eligible for the Free and Reduced Price Lunch program which is up to 185 percent of the federal poverty level. ECEAP eligible is 110 percent of the federal poverty level.

Percentages Ready for Kindergarten Entry

	ECEAP Pre-K (4-year-olds)			WaKIDS	
	Fall 2014 (November) n≈5,202	4's Spring 2015 (April-May) n≈5,201	Spring 2015, after two years of ECEAP n≈129	Fall 2015 Low Income only n≈23,793	Fall 2015 All WaKIDS n≈41,755
Social-Emotional	38.8%	92.1%	96.8%	68.1%	73.2%
Physical	42.1%	93.1%	98.5%	73.4%	77.3%
Language	41.8%	88.4%	96.2%	72.3%	78.9%
Cognitive	35.3%	92.7%	97.7%	57.4%	74.6%
Literacy	30.1%	88.0%	96.1%	73.2%	80.9%
Mathematics	8.8%	65.1%	79.7%	49.4%	60.8%

Using the kindergarten readiness benchmark in *GOLD™ by Teaching Strategies*, we can see that few children start their Pre-K year in ECEAP with kindergarten entry skills. At the end of one year of ECEAP, the percentage of ECEAP children with kindergarten entry skills exceeds the rate for all WaKIDS children and for low-income WaKIDS children. For the 129 children with two years of ECEAP, the results are remarkably higher.

Kindergarten Readiness by Race

The data below display spring 2015 *GOLD™* results for ECEAP Pre-K children in their year just before kindergarten, by race and ethnicity. These results include children who attended ECEAP for at least six months and for whom race or ethnicity data was associated with their *GOLD™* record. Please note that some sample sizes are small.

	White n≈3,283	Black n≈451	Asian n≈238	American Indian/ Alaska Native n≈176	Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander n≈14	Biracial Multiracial n≈292	Hispanic n≈2,347
Social-Emotional	91.5%	93.2%	90.9%	92.0%	85.7%	90.8%	92.6%
Physical	92.6%	93.2%	93.8%	95.0%	85.7%	91.6%	93.2%
Language	87.8%	94.5%	83.3%	90.4%	92.9%	91.8%	84.5%
Cognitive	92.1%	94.0%	91.3%	91.6%	92.9%	91.2%	92.4%
Literacy	86.6%	92.9%	91.5%	87.7%	71.4%	89.7%	83.4%
Mathematics	63.2%	73.4%	66.7%	67.6%	53.8%	68.2%	57.0%

Child Health Outcomes

Based on 9,683 children who were in ECEAP 120 days or longer:

		Percent of children at enrollment	Percent of children at ECEAP exit
Medical Care	No medical home	8%	3%
	No medical coverage	8%	0%
	Behind schedule on immunizations	26%	4%
	Behind schedule for well-child exam	38%	7%
	Received medical treatment as a result of exams while in ECEAP	N/A	1% 81 children
	Received an individualized ECEAP health plan for chronic illness	N/A	7% 721 children
Dental Care	No dental home	16%	5%
	No dental coverage	10%	0%
	Behind schedule on dental screenings	57%	7%

Mental Health	Received dental treatment as a result of exams while in ECEAP	N/A	6% 593 children
	Mental health consultation	N/A	4% 402 children
Vision Care	Received vision care as a result of ECEAP screening	N/A	2% 204 children
Hearing	Received hearing care as a result of ECEAP screening	N/A	1% 49 children

Medical home

A medical home is a health care provider or clinic where the child receives ongoing, coordinated sick and preventive care. A medical home increases timely and appropriate use of pediatric services and avoids use of the emergency room for routine care. ECEAP staff worked closely with families to establish a medical home for children who did not have one.

Medical coverage

In 2014-15, eight percent of ECEAP children had no medical coverage when they enrolled. Children with public or private health insurance are more likely than children without insurance to have a regular and accessible source of health care. ECEAP staff worked with families over the year to ensure their children had medical coverage.

Well-child exams

At the time of enrollment only 49 percent of ECEAP children were up to date on their annual well-child medical exams. By the end of the year, 94 percent were on schedule. These exams revealed health issues for 101 ECEAP children, who then received treatment.

Dental care

Regular dental visits provide an opportunity for prevention, early diagnosis, and treatment of oral and craniofacial diseases and conditions. When they enrolled in Fall 2014, only 43 percent of ECEAP children were up to date with dental screenings. For children who attended ECEAP all school year, 93 percent had dental screenings and necessary follow-up treatment. Dental cavities are the single most common disease of childhood.



Mental Health Consultation

For four percent of children, ECEAP provided consultation by a mental health professional with a parent or staff member regarding the child's behavior or mental health.

ECEAP Health and Developmental Screenings

A boy in our extended day ECEAP class needed a one-on-one aide to assist him because of his behavior. When we screened his hearing, we found out he wasn't hearing well. As a result of our referral, the doctor put tubes in his ears.

To understand his behavior better, we also requested a mental health consultation. As a result of his developmental screening in ECEAP, we referred him for evaluation. We accompanied his parent for the evaluation and the child was put on an IEP for developmental delays.

In September, he was off to kindergarten with his hearing, behavior, and developmental issues addressed and his IEP in place.

Clark County ECEAP Staff

Family Engagement

ECEAP provides early learning experiences to children and also engages and supports their families. ECEAP staff use the nationally-recognized Family Support Principles when working with families, focusing on parent and family strengths.

Families are invited to volunteer in the classroom, attend parent education sessions, participate in parent-teacher conferences, work with a family support specialist on family goals and develop leadership skills.

ECEAP helps families build social networks and a sense of community. These connections strengthen families and help them be more resilient during difficult times. ECEAP increases parent's knowledge, skills, abilities and resources, which builds their capacity to support their children in kindergarten and beyond.

Parenting

A Marysville family support specialist worked with a family for six years, as different children enrolled in ECEAP. She said, with all of the stresses in life, it can be hard for some parents to appreciate their children. But because staff talked in a positive manner about the children, the mom was able to see them in a different light. In the end, the mom said, "Thank you. I was able to love my child."

The specialist said it's her job to break down the chaos of life and help families find resources. She can connect families to financial support for many needs, from basic like food and clothing to others such as bedding and even tires for a car. "We have to work with them to build trust," she said. "We respect every family for who they are."

Marysville Globe, October 7, 2015

Family Self-Sufficiency

During this year in ECEAP, I have accomplished some of my major family goals. I got a new job and make significantly more than I was before, although still not enough to lift my little family out of poverty. I have also started grad school. Extended day ECEAP gives me the chance to do the work I need to do that will make me completely self-sufficient and it lets me feel confident that my boys are getting the care and education that will help them in the future. The extra two months in ECEAP give me two months more of support to strengthen my family's foundation.

From a Snohomish County ECEAP Parent

Finding a Home and Job

When they applied for ECEAP, this child and her father were living in a homeless shelter. She had been expelled from two previous child care settings due to behavior. Once in the program, Dad was able to secure employment while his child attended extended day ECEAP and they moved into shared housing. We assisted them with getting her an IEP and helped her daily with her feelings and social-emotional growth.

From Clark County ECEAP Staff

A Message from a former ECEAP Child...

I am a first generation college graduate, I have an older brother who also graduated from WSU with his Bachelor's in Accounting and will be going back for his Masters in the fall. We grew up in the Tri-Cities and were always encouraged by our parents to continue our education beyond high school. My parents both worked in agriculture. My dad has always been the provider while my mom has mostly been a stay at home mom. Our parents taught us the value of education and good work ethics. Mom would always try to help us with our homework as much as she could without knowing the English language. In the summers, our parents would take us to work with them where we would pick cherries in June and watch them work the potato season in August. We picked cherries with them until we reached the age of 16 when we could go out and find our own employment.

Growing up, we didn't realize how difficult it was for our parents to raise three children on their yearly wages. We always had what we needed, we were happy. We received a lot of help from the community. I remember we were adopted as a family several times on Christmas and families would bring us gifts as well as basic necessities. Even though our mom never learned to drive, she always found the way to get us signed up for programs like The Salvation Army. She plays a huge role in who we have become. She took initiative and found programs like ECEAP for us to be a part of. I don't doubt that ECEAP helped pave my way through school. I don't recall having issues learning new topics or keeping my grades up. My parent's encouragement, determination, and their hard work shaped who my brothers and I have become. I continue to thrive and to become a better person for them. They worked too hard in their lives to see us succeed for me to let them down.

When I found out what ECEAP stood for, I knew I wanted to be part of it because I found myself relating to it. My first week as ECEAP staff, I got to meet Anita Torres again. She was my ECEAP home visitor when I was a child. My mother recalls how great Anita was and how pleasant she was every time she visited. I still see the same kindness in her that I saw when I was a child. It is a shock to me that I remember who she is and that she is still impacting children's lives, like she did mine. The positivity that surrounds ECEAP makes me realize why it has become so successful and why it continues to thrive. I could not ask for a better program to be a part of.

A note about Anita Torres: Anita was born and raised in a migrant worker family in Texas. She has worked as an ECEAP Family Support Specialist in Kennewick since 1988. She particularly enjoys that she works with families dealing with the same lifestyle she knew as a child. With solid support from her ECEAP directors and other mentors, she is a very professional team member and works well with a variety of cultures, focusing on their expressed needs and empowering their lives.